2016 Linux Australia Office-bearer report: Secretary

Executive summary

2016 was another successful year for Linux Australia Council. Social media exposure of Linux Australia continued to grow gradually. In addition the day-to-day running of Linux Australia proceeded without issue; the organisation was again run smoothly, with quorum achieved at a majority of fortnightly meetings, ensuring strong and rapid decision making.

Meetings

During 2016, 23 Council teleconferences and 1 face-to-face meeting were held. Quorum was achieved at each of them, and minutes were produced and made public via the website. Action items were generally tracked well.

Handover activities

This was my second year as Secretary and I am seeking re-election for 2017. However for future years I have extensively documented the process and Linux Australia has gone to great lengths to create Position Descriptions for each of the roles in Linux Australia (https://github.com/linuxaustralia/position-descriptions). Upon reflection on the requirements for each of the roles, we have been able to provide a realistic indication of the time commitment required by each of the different Council members. There has also been a slight change to the scope of the "Ordinary Council Member" role allowing for greater input into the various Sub-Committees by Council members.

An Operations Manual has also been developed to enable a more streamlined approach to Linux Australia's activities including an Events Checklist and Activities Calendar; this will remain a work in progress over 2017.

Membership

The current membership system, MemberDB has a number of reporting inaccuracies. Membership is thus reported as below with duplicates removed which is a more accurate estimate of actual members.

On 29 November 2015 Linux Australia had 3207 members
On 27 January 2016 Linux Australia had 3388 members
On 04 January 2017 Linux Australia had 3598 members [0]

This represents a yearly growth of around 9% which is steady.

The Membership Subcommittee conducted a renewal process this has resulted in **1026** renewals. These members will be carried through to any future system that Council deems applicable to Linux Australia.

"because member expiry and renewal is not possible with MemberDB, there are likely to be significant 'expired' members in MemberDB. Future Councils should strongly consider selecting an alternative to MemberDB, which although it has served Linux Australia well, is now end of life. Some preliminary measures have been taken here in articulating a draft requirements document. Future Councils may wish to prioritise the replacement of MemberDB and a concomitant update of member details." - K. Reid

Media and communications

The Media Team have provided a separate report this year available at:
http://lists.linux.org.au/pipermail/linux-aus/2016-December/022909.html

Handling of correspondence

Linux Australia handled a large volume of correspondence this year, including requests for termination of membership, financial correspondence, enquiries from like organisations such as The Australian Digital Alliance and the Australian Libraries Copyright Committee, enquiries from campaigns and related movements (TPPA, EFA etc) and again a small volume of support requests. All correspondence were tracked via minutes and responded to.

Linux Australia has also received a notable amount of correspondence in regards to the VPAC closure and in response to Linux Australia's Statement regarding Jacob Appelbaum.

Thanks

Sae Ra Germaine
Secretary
Linux Australia
January 2017

[0] Due to the Council Elections being held at the time there are still a number of membership applicants that have not been approved.